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HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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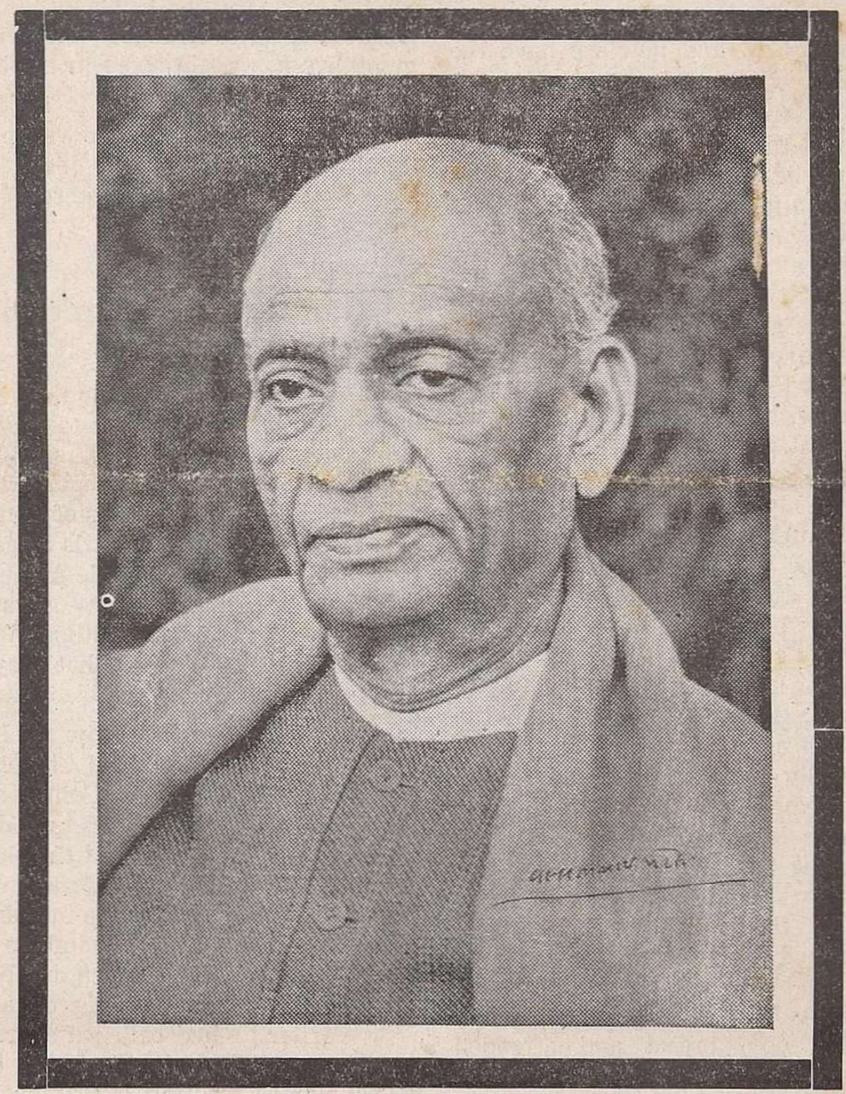
THE LOSS OF SARDAR



News has just reached me of the end of Sardar Vallabhbhai's earthly life. For several years past he was more like my eldest brother to me than just a leader. It is always difficult for me to write about one with whom I feel a sense resembling that of identity.

I have got so much used to death, that it has ceased to upset me too much. And yet the loss of such dear and respected souls like Jamnalalji, Mahadevbhai, Gandhiji and now Sardar, not to mention others not known to the world, each leaves on the mind a lesson, which is painful. Habit enables me to bear it with seeming composure, and to perform my duties without showing signs of being unhinged; but the interest in worldly life diminishes with each such loss of friend.

The world will mourn the Sardar's death, as it has mourned so many others. Even his opponents will pay, for a while, glowing and

sincerely-felt tributes. But after a time, the world ceases to miss them. It instals new heroes and transfers its worship to them.

Personal friends, however, miss them for good and irreplaceably. The Sardar's death is such a one for me and so many others like me. But since it has to be borne, it must be so done with fortitude.

Wardha, 15-12-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

LIFE FOR DUTY

Just as the December number of the *Sarvodaya* was about to be issued today, news was received of Sardar Vallabhbhai's demise. The editor of a magazine needs must write something immediately, and so the printers postponed printing for a time and the editor sat down at his table to write. What he will write, God only knows.

It was only a few days since the *yogi* Shri Aravinda passed away and now we have the news that the Sardar is no more.

One of the newspapers writing on the *yogi* Shri Aravinda said that it was not possible for us yet to measure the loss we have sustained by the demise of such a great man. Men of coarser intellect will not even feel its touch, they will not be even aware of it. It requires a subtle and refined intellect even to realize this loss. This in short is the gist, in my words, of what the paper wrote in connection with Shri Aravinda's death. But the loss due to the Sardar's demise, even men with the grossest intellect will realize in an instant.

The service rendered by a *dhyana-yogi* (contemplative thinker) who strives to raise the spiritual level of human life remains concealed in the region of the unmanifest. The service rendered by the active (*karma-yogi*) social worker who spends his life in solving the problems facing society and in making people's life happy, being in the manifest, is visible to the naked eye. We have lost almost within the period of a week two such benefactors of ours, men of diametrically opposite natures.

But both of them have completed their *sadhanas* and have left us enough material to guide us. That the Sardar could survive the death of Gandhiji was due solely to his strong determined will and the inspiration and grace of God. That he desired to live after Gandhiji was simply for the good of us, his countrymen. Hence it was that he buried his grief at the loss of Gandhiji in his own breast and attended whole-heartedly to the duties before him.

We should learn this very lesson from their lives and should apply ourselves to the task in hand without being overpowered by grief. प्राप्तं प्राप्तमुपासीत हृदयेनापराजितः । (With the heart ever undaunted, one should discharge whatever duty comes to him).

Paramdham, Paunar, VINOBA
15-12-'50

(Translated from the Hindi *Sarvodaya*)

THIS "MR" BUSINESS

When our Prime Minister gave instructions that he was, in future, to be referred to not as Pandit, but Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, I thought that the Indian newspaper editors would, in his case at least, begin using the indigenous prefix *Shri* instead of the English *Mr*. But no — from the very next day they began referring to Mr Nehru! No self-respecting Italian or Frenchman would dream of referring to his own countrymen as "Mr". He would always say Signor or Monsieur as the case might be, just as a German would say Herr. Each prefix carries with it the right tone suited to, and suggestive of, the race concerned.

For many years during the freedom struggle there was a strong aversion to the use of "Mr" and we were awake to the dangers of foreign mesmerism. But now that the so-called freedom is ours, strangely enough the old slave mentality has again come to the surface.

This "Mr" business is insidiously degrading, and we have our newspaper editors to thank for it more than any one else. How I wish they would awaken to a sense of national self-respect in this matter!

Pashulok, 6-12-'50 MIRA

GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCE

The Editor,

I was just reading your note in the *Harijan* of the 2nd instant on steps taken against black-marketeers. You have very faithfully said what needs to be mentioned as regards the duties and responsibilities of Chambers of Commerce in this country. Unfortunately, it is a fact that Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations in this country have not been co-operating with the established Government, although in their communications they observe that they do not want to support profiteering and black-marketing.

I have just returned from my European tour where I had visited several Chambers of Commerce in the U. K. and the Continent. There is a perfect harmony and understanding between Chambers of Commerce and the Government, so much so that no measure of national importance is rushed through and made into an Act without consulting the important Chambers of Commerce. You will be surprised to learn that before Sir Stafford Cripps announced his devaluation plan, a day earlier he had called the President of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce and explained to him Government's decision on such a question of national importance. There was perfect secrecy maintained till the announcement was made. I shudder to think what a President here in India would have done if Government's decision were disclosed to him beforehand.

Yours,
P. M. SHAH,
Editor, *The Indian Exporter*.

AN INVITATION TO WORKERS *

Whenever I address a gathering I feel an inspiration, I know not whence, as if I was entering the very hearts of my hearers and becoming identified with them. I feel the same just now. And yet I do not quite know what I should say to you.

Samya-Yoga

Ever since I wound up my tour programme about a year ago and sat down here at *Paramdham* (Paunar), I have been thinking hard on the ways and means of making the millions in India's villages self-reliant. I am also carrying on some experiments on their behalf. And an impression is growing upon me that there are several things, which for various reasons we had not been able to execute so far, but which are quite easy and simple to do. If we but could do them, much of the verbosity would become unnecessary and our objects would be fulfilled in a natural manner. Gandhiji has left to us instructions sufficiently and fully enough to last us for the whole of our life. *Samyayogi* (roughly meaning collective) self-sufficiency was an important item in his programme. But for various reasons not much heed could be paid to it. I, therefore, resolved to become a farmer. At one time I was a teacher. For some time I was also a weaver. For a while I played also the scavenger. Thus after practising one occupation after another I have now taken to agriculture. I implore you all to co-operate with me in my work. Please do not ask me to give you a lecture on what I have been doing. But come to my place, see what I am doing and then we might discuss about it. It may not be possible for me to find time for addressing a public meeting, but I shall be able to find ample time to talk to inquiring visitors from villages. This is my standing invitation to you all.

Ever-Freshness

I live by the side of the river Dham. It flows throughout the year. Sometimes I recline on her bank, and we begin to chat. I ask her: "Mother, when did you commence your journey? How long will you go on? What is the object behind your incessant flow?" And she replies: "I cannot say when I started flowing. Nor can I say when it will end. I also know not why I flow. All that I know is that I flow. But since you want to know the object of my flowing, well, it is this — to meet the sea."

I rejoin, "But you *have* met the sea long long ago!" And she returns: "Ever and anew I shall go on meeting the sea."

On goes the rippling stream, a standing witness of continuity. This continuity emanates from the ever-freshness of her waters. This would be impossible if new water did not come in place of the old. It is such freshness that is required in the life of the individual and society. Ever fresh ideas, ever fresh conceptions. Tukaram says: "Control your mind so that every morning brings you fresh awakening." Such should be the flow of the river of life. Those blessed with such life will always experience freshness. Their life will be replete with ever new experiments. The maxim of life is: The *yoga* (system) is one; but its applications are many. If the right form of application is not achieved life becomes a void. If life loses its sap, and ideas lose their essence, what is left is mere chaff. Hence the need for ever new *tapas* (disciplined and rigorous effort).

There was a time when our workers rendered very creditable service. But they must not remain satisfied with it. They must ponder over the fact that despite maunds of rice consumed since one's birth, one demands rice again every day. No one ever thinks that since he has already consumed a lot he need not have any more food. In this endless seeking is contained the inspiration of life.

Never Old to Change

At times I hear people saying that it was too late for them to make any change now. The complex of one's incapacity to make changes on attaining old age has seized many among us. It is contrary to the teachings of our scriptures, which lay down a plan of life involving constant change. The ancient *rishi* enjoined education upon a child so long as it was a difficult task for it. As soon as the pupil got used to a routine life of studies, the *rishi* bade him take to a life of service (responsibility). He thought that if the pupil continued to make mere studies, which had become too simple a work for him, his life-long occupation, he would grow indolent and lethargic. So, the young man had to make a home for himself. He did this with hard labour. As soon as he found himself well practised to that kind of life and its sacrifices and struggles, the *rishi* again came in to call upon him to leave the house and give up everything lock, stock and barrel. If the householder implored the *rishi* to have mercy for his declining age, the *rishi* consoled him by saying that it was out of sheer compassion on him that that course was prescribed for him, so that he might not find life dull and joyless, and a bore and burden to his own people. So the householder had to abandon all and lead a life of discipline (*tapas*) as a *vanaprastha*, relying upon the goodwill of society for his maintenance. But there, too, as soon as he got accustomed to that life and felt content with it, the *rishi* stepped in and commanded him not to remain stationary in one place, but take to walking. If the old man protested saying that he could not move about without exterior help, the *rishi* handed him a staff and said, "Now take this and take to walking on and on, for the good of society. The king, too, is a holder of the staff. He can put down anarchy, but the order established by him is of a very queer sort. Hence this work is entrusted to you."

"Dying in Harness!"

The English idiom *dying in harness* has become a sort of cherished end of life with some of us. It creates in them an insistence to stick to their offices even though very old. They hold on to their seats in the Congress and local self-government bodies. My argument with them is: Do not die in a stable, if you do not like it; but is there no place other than the harness or the stable to die in? Why should you not retire to a forest, and die there? Religious teaching expects of us the spirit of making new experiments on life everyday. But we seem to have lost that spirit.

Kho-Kho

You all know the game of *kho-kho*, in which the player who is on his legs gives a push to one of his seated companions, and that companion is expected to be always ready to move and carry on the game. If he fails he is declared 'out'. A person must behave precisely so in his life. When he occupies a post, he must be on the look-out as to who will beckon him to get up and leave his seat. It is not desirable that the older generation should wait until it is ejected by new men at elections. They have lost the capacity of thinking out any new plan of work as also that of executing the duties of the old. Yet they stick to their places. Of course, some among the youngsters too are afraid of the prospect of the retirement of the older people. But this fear is illusory.

Want of Perseverance

We often begin a thing very bravely. I shall give you a simple illustration. When the idea of the Peace Army came to the fore, people joined it so enthusiastically as if all our previous activities had been trivial, and this alone was the right thing to do. But now I find that though my Dham flows on as steadily as in the past, the workers of the Peace Army have lost their zeal and fervour. There will be a recurrence of enthusiastic activity for some time, when a new programme is started again. But after a while that too will vanish, and the state of affairs will again be 'as it was'. This is not good.

* Summary of speech delivered at Wardha Tahsil Khadi-Wearers' Conference on 15th October, 1950.

Whole-hogger Workers

I try to discover from such gatherings a new worker, if possible. If this conference were to give even one new worker who would renounce all and dedicate himself to the cause of service, with a single mind, it will have achieved its purpose. We do not want a worker who has an axe of his own to grind along with a desire to render service. As Tukaram has said, such a man will be pushed out from both the ends. If there is need for this kind of service in society, such devout workers must come out to take it up.

You have just discussed a few schemes of village industries like oil, *gur*, agriculture etc. Different people have emphasized one or another of them as more important than the rest. Let it be any. What I wish to know is, are new workers coming out to work them? I look at you avidly with the hope that at least one from amongst you will feel like coming up to join.

Need for Continuous Sacrifice

Some people argue that they had worked so far with great energy, self-sacrifice and detachment as enjoined by the *Gita*. Now that there is Swaraj should they still be expected to make more sacrifices? I tell them that the *Gita* is not so simple to be acted upon and be finished with. Moreover, if, before Swaraj, I advised them to aspire and struggle to live, should I now say that Swaraj having been attained, they should now give up life? If after leading a life of sacrifice a person feels fed up with it, it follows that he did not relish the taste of real sacrifice. Even as a seed properly sown yields ten times as much, so must one act of sacrifice grow into ten such acts. If this does not take place, the first act of sacrifice should be regarded as having proved barren.

Significance of Swaraj

What is the significance of Swaraj? It means that responsibility has fallen on our own shoulders. The initiative which was denied to us so far has now come to us. Freedom connotes power to initiate acts. During slavery we could not determine our *dharma* (duty) for ourselves. This freedom has now been restored to us. What a tragedy it would be if at the moment of our coming to our own and recovering our strength, we throw ourselves down as finished and exhausted! It would mean still-birth, the extinction of life at the moment when it should begin to live by itself. This is erroneous thinking. Some of us, however, have fallen into it.

Need of the Hour

The need of the hour is to identify ourselves with the poor masses of India. We must tell them that we could not do so till now for several reasons. The British had not only placed before us various temptations, but even the education they imparted to us was such, as disabled us from speaking the language of the masses. We are told that our old leaders could speak English better than the ordinary Englishman himself and some of them even dreamt their dreams in English. This should really be regarded as the separation of the cow from her calf. But this is uast history. The calf is now reunited with its mother. Come, let us now work together and make the necessary sacrifices too. Let us dedicate ourselves to the service of the masses.

The Twilight Period of Our Society

There is a reference in the *Gita* of the manner of a *yogi's* death. At the hour of parting the *yogi* pierces darkness and concentrates his attention upon the rising sun. To the *yogi* the hour of death is the hour of awakening. Our country is in the same condition today. It is the twilight period when the old tattered social system has to be cast off and replaced by a new rising one. Those who will not awake now will lose what they have gained and be plunged into deeper darkness than before. The people must, therefore, shake themselves up into wakefulness and begin to be active. New workers must come forward, and the old ones must make room for them.

I have already invited you to visit and study the work at Paunar. I give another invitation also. Those of you who feel inspired to renounce their all and to come to me are quite welcome. There is enough work for them.

VINOBA

(Translated from the Hindi *Sarvodaya*, Nov., 1950)

SHRIMATI ANANDIBAI KARVE

Shrimati Anandibai Karve, wife of Shri Dhondo Keshav *alias* Annasaheb Karve, the well-known social reformer and devoted servant of the cause of women died a few days ago at the age of eighty-six. There was a difference of about six or seven years between the husband and wife, the latter being naturally the junior partner.

I had the good fortune of seeing Annasaheb twice. The second occasion was when he came to Wardha on a visit to Gandhiji, and casually visited Paramdham also. Paramdham is situated on a hill on the bank of the river Dham. He alighted from his car at the foot of the hill and walked up the hill to see me. We had a long chat on diverse subjects. The talks were no mere talks, they were his blessings showered on me.

We also talked about his health, how he kept quite fit even at such an old age. During the course of the conversation I asked him about the health of Shrimati Karve also. He told me that she was also keeping normally good health, but she was much weaker than he. She could not move about much. She had to suffer a great deal more than himself. I then asked him where she was at that time. He said that she was sitting in the car just below. He had left her in the car as she was unable to walk up the hill. Had I not inquired about the whereabouts of Shrimati Karve, it was hardly likely that I could have known this fact. I then went down the hill and paid my respects to the old lady. This incident occured some eight years ago.

The married life of Shri Annasaheb and Shrimati Anandibai reminds one of the domestic life of the great Maharashtrian saint Shri Eknath and his wife the venerable Girjabai. Both helped each other in the cultivation of peace of mind, mercy, equality and other qualities. The sacred memories of such persons make the transient lives of men in this world blessed.

Paramdham, Pavnar, VINOBA
14-12-'50

(Translated from the Hindi *Sarvodaya*, December, 1950)

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"THAT IS WHAT GANDHI DID"

[Prof. Beauson Tseng and his sister represented China at last year's World Pacifist Meeting at Santiniketan and Sevagram. I am glad to share with the readers of *Harijan* the following letter, which I have just received from him. It shows how well Gandhiji is understood by all those who have studied him seriously.—K. G. M.]

It is now more than eight months since we parted at the World Pacifist Meeting. Santiniketan and Sevagram were like little oases of peace and concord in a desert of hatred and strife. The temptation to look back with yearning is strong. But that was not what the Conference was meant for. The world is now faced with a possible new total war to be fought with all the ingenuity of mass destruction and regimentation that man can conjure up. How are we going to relate the World Pacifist Meeting to the present situation as far as each one of us is personally concerned? The oasis is meant to be the source of a living stream which shall, through our individual consecration, gradually but irresistibly clothe the desert with an ever-expanding green verdure. In keeping with the recommendation of the Conference, we endeavour to seek light and guidance in fellowship. Greetings be unto you!

In spite of the war in Korea, I still hold fast to the belief that the dawn is nearer than we dare to hope. Darwin took God away from man's intellect. Gandhi reinstated Him. It is an impious way of stating it, but no expression less shocking can adequately convey the tremendous significance of what Gandhi did. The philosophical basis of all modern thinking and the revolutions it has brought forth do not lack in idealism. But it is evident that they have been progressively more scientific and, illogically, as a consequence less spiritual. The modern idealist is prepared to die by the million in order to build up a secular utopia by secular means alone. He denies the reality of anything but that which is material or secular. While his utter sincerity carries everything before him like a tornado, his inevitable ruthlessness rots the very idealism at its core from which he draws inspiration and strength. Thus step by step Darwinism ousted God from His own creation. Then came Gandhi. Gandhi fought singlehanded the mightiest empire the world had ever known. And he won. He won because he fought on a battleground, and with weapons, of his own choice. Not only bombs and guns did not feature, even ill-feeling was taboo. There was no intrigue, no lie, no compromise, no hitting below the belt in any sense whatsoever. He defeated the British by insisting on their being a people with a conscience no less active than any other people's. It was an unknown type of warfare born of faith and humility. For the first time since Darwin spirituality reasserted its supremacy over secularism and did so in a struggle involving hundreds of millions of people. This single victory will probably supply enough spiritual motivation for reforms and revolutions for a thousand years to come. That is what Gandhi did. Do we fully realize its significance? Surely the dawn cannot be far off.

Let us come down to something more practical. Any patriot, given sufficient following, could drive out an alien ruler by hatred and violence. But not every one can thereby convert the vanquished erstwhile conqueror into a staunch friend. Gandhi deprived the British of their Indian Empire only to raise the Commonwealth, in which Britain and India would co-operate as equals, to a higher plane of organic unity. The Gandhian technique integrates while it tears asunder; heals where it cuts. This is a practical rule of thumb for any matter-of-fact pacifist confronted with a baffling situation. After all, human evils do not end with the ejection of an alien ruler, nor with the overthrow of any particular political system or social order, nor even with the abolition of war. No, not at all. It is not given to mortal man to be without sin or inner wounds on account of sinfulness. Hence critical situations will continually arise no matter what we do. Our concern is our relation to such situations. Do we as pacifists exploit by our very pacifism human sin and suffering for any calculated aim? Or do we redeem and heal out of pure love without any external aim at all? That is the criterion. And that is the solidest gain we got out of the Conference, for it is capable of everyday personal application.

I cannot close this letter without expressing our deep sense of gratitude, my sister's and mine, to our Indian friends and the Indian Government. They have been kindness itself. I would like to mention a simple anecdote. My sister and I tried to buy a spoon one day in Madras. We went to a wrong shop. Of course, they could not sell us any. We apologized and came out. We had hardly gone twenty paces before we were overtaken by an attractive young fellow. The shop would like us to accept a spoon as a present. Would we kindly give them the pleasure of serving us in a small way? He would not take "No, thank you" for an answer. We have the spoon now. And we are going to treasure it as a memento. There you have a glimpse of India, the generous.

15-9-'50 BEAUSON TSENG

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INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS

A group of over forty young men and women, coming from colleges in all parts of India and East Pakistan as well as from the centres of constructive work, lived together at Rasulia for sixteen days from October 15 to October 30, '50. This was made possible by the "American Friends' Service Committee", which has been responsible for the holding of 115 such seminars in America, Europe and the East this year. The convener, Shri Donald G. Groom of Rasulia (M. P.), reporting on this says:

"We are filled with gratitude for this opportunity and warmly greet all those who shared in seminars in the different parts of the world, conscious of the privilege it is to have become part of such a rich fellowship which has broken down all barriers of nationality, race and religion, and formed one family of friends. We look forward to playing our part in helping to bring forth in the world the fruits of such a fellowship — peace, harmony, goodwill, understanding and brotherhood. Our life together at Rasulia has given us an insight into the reality of these fruits of the spirit, and coming as we have from Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, China, America, Great Britain, Afghanistan, Norway and Switzerland, and having affiliations with religions of Christianity (Catholic and Protestant), Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, we affirm our faith in our fundamental oneness as also in man's ability to build up a world community which will allow for the full development of all.

"This seminar has been in truth a 'seed-bed' and as we are each transplanted into fields of study and work at home or overseas, we pray for the strength to put this faith into practice.

"We have considered a wide range of subjects, the problem of human nature, the problem of inter-religious and inter-cultural conflicts, the problem of refugees and their rehabilitation, and finally the character of the ideal world commuity. We have learned much of the basis of world community through our living together during these two weeks, and we have seen that underlying the solutions of the problems that we have faced is the need for a new faith in God and man which will result in deeper relationships, better understanding and a readiness to listen to and learn from one another.

"We commend this seminar movement to all, and trust that the organizers will be encouraged to proceed with the plan to hold similar seminars in the future in India and Pakistan."

This is an example of one type of constructive work that students may well undertake. Such a seminar will be arranged at Kodaikanal in April, 1951. Those interested may write to the undersigned.

RALPH RICHARD KEITHAHN

Gandhi Gram,
Ambathurai, S. I. Ry.

By Mahatma Gandhi

BAPU'S LETTERS TO MIRA

(Written to Mirabehn during 1924-'48)

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A GERMAN STUDENT OF HINDI

While even patriots of India and Pakistan fight shy of, or are nervous about, learning Hindi and Urdu and continue to propagate in favour of English, it is interesting to note how a German lover of India is engaged in the perseverant study of Hindi in *both* the scripts, and how much pains he has been taking to obtain useful literature for that purpose at his own expense and against considerable difficulties of remitting money to India in the present international relations. He is the Head-Master of a village school. He has never set his foot in India. But he has learnt some of the oriental languages and also Gandhiji's writings. The latter inspired him to study Hindi in both the scripts, and to mould his personal life in accordance with Gandhiji's teachings. He came to know me through Miss Barbara Hartland (Vasantibehn of Sevagram), whom he had known before. Some months ago he requested me to find for him an Indian friend of Gandhian way of life and thinking, either living in Germany or happening to go there to stay with him for some time as a companion. The object was to obtain a direct contact with Gandhiji's ideas put into practice and to hear Hindi as spoken by an Indian. It was not impossible to find one competent for the latter purpose; but I had to confess that I was not in touch with any one whom I could point out for the first purpose.

But meanwhile Herr Albert Reinbold (for that is his name) pursues his Hindi study with enviable zeal. Let me share with the reader a part of his latest letter (22nd October) to me:

"... I used every minute to drive forth my Hindi attainments. For I am not contented with English editions of Indian papers. I should like to know, what the Indians say among themselves in their own tongue. A year ago, I should have thought it impossible to make out a Nagari text. But now, I am glad to say that I am in full hope, within a year or so, to read the Hindi monthlies, albeit with some difficulties.

"... I am greatly in want of a great dictionary Hindi-English (not a pocket dictionary) printed in Nagari, which I hope the bookseller could procure me. But mind please! The invoice is to be sent first, then the bookseller must wait, till the payment is remitted; for, I am not at all sure, whether the request of Indian currency will be consented to, and I don't know the time the formalities will require. Red-tape work is slow all the world over!

"You wrote in your last letter that India is not free from the grip of modern civilization. As I am beginning to be tired of modern civilization, I would really regret if the Indian people would give away its own cultural peculiarities for an illusion, doomed to its breakdown sooner or later. I will not say that India should not barter ideas with us. The East, having given to Europe unmeasurable instigations for thousands of years, does not compromise its dignity by taking back the interests. *Ex oriente lux* (light comes from the East) is more than a convenient saying. Its punning inversion *Ex occidente cux* (share in a mine) is likely to be a very characteristic judgment of European imperialism. Therefore, I wish that the Indian nation would stand fast on its own ground, and not buy every pig in a poke as the saying is, without looking very carefully at it beforehand. As I see it, Gandhism can actuate the Indian soul as a permanent monitor. If, according to your own judgment, Gandhism looks like the pale moon besides the bright sun, please do not forget, how bright we looked in all our performances during the Third Reich, and what is left, is nothing more than cinders. This paleness is indeed one of the most ingenious of Gandhiji's perceptions, and it conceals greater powers of soul than the average European, accustomed to his fussy ado, will ever realize. I regret that the German people generally is very far from recognizing this fundamental truth."

* * *

At the end there are the following sentences in Nagari:

"अब सोचता हूँ कि वह बड़ी चिढठी हुअी है आजके लिये। आषा रखता हूँ कि भविश्यमें से अधिक हिन्दी और थोड़ी अंग्रेज़ी लिख सकूँगा.

With my kindest regards (वह हिन्दीमें जान्ता नहीं!)

तुम्हारा जेर्मन दोस्त

अल्बेर्त रेअिन्बोल्द्

क्रिपा करके कअी पंकति हिन्दीमें लिखो"

Let his example inspire our professors, politicians and patriots. I give below his address, if any of my readers would like to enter into correspondence with him and help him.

Address: Herr Albert Reinbold, Rektor, Saudhausen b. Hdlbg. Hagstieg 2. (Germany).

Wardha, 31-10-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

COCA-COLA IN FRANCE

Harijan has done right in showing to the public the harmful effects on health of the American drink Coca-Cola. There is a lot of apathy and indifference in this country about these matters; but in the case of Coca-Cola, the public in India could not be blamed, for its properties are absolutely unknown to them.

Apart from the question of white sugar mentioned in the article, there is the definitely harmful effect of caffein in the drink. The percentage may appear small, but since four or five bottles of Coca-Cola are expected to be taken by some during the hot season, the cumulative effect of the drink must be considerable. Among the children and youth, surely there are no tea or coffee addicts at their age but they may be converted to Coca-Cola with the consequent evil effects on the constitution of the growing young.

In France, the drink was strongly attacked on grounds of health when it was first introduced. The first Bill aiming at banning its sale in France, introduced last year in the French National Assembly, described the drink as "toxic" because it contained "benzoate of soda". The presence of phosphorous is also elsewhere mentioned. One can well question the advisability of putting on the market a beverage with so many so-called stimulants in

it. The whole idea of giving a healthy thirst-quenching beverage is lost if a "dope" like this — in the southern States of America it was so called once — is given to an ignorant public.

In France, both the Commission on Family, Population and Health and the Commission on Beverages have condemned Coca-Cola outright.

V. A. K. PILLAI

A RIFT IN FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Every one feels distressed that in a country like ours which is recognized on all hands as mainly agricultural and is watered by hundreds of rivers, food should have to be imported from abroad. Government's resolve to stop importing food is long since proclaimed. 31st March, 1952 has been fixed as the final date, after which import of foods will be stopped. In the course of a debate in the Parliament the Government made a clarification that the policy was subject to the following three exceptions:

(i) difficulties caused by crop-failure;

(ii) need for raising other crops in lieu of food in the larger interest of the country; and

(iii) the requirements for building up a surplus central stock.

These exceptions deserve to be examined carefully to find out the extent of the rift they make in the original resolve.

But I propose to confine myself just now to the examination of the second exception only. I think that the reasoning behind this exception is basically faulty. It is analogous to the thinking process of our dependent and helpless farmer about his personal economic affairs. Boiled down it almost means that food will be imported, if in terms of money it is profitable to do so; not, if it is otherwise. Say, for instance, if jute, cotton or tobacco were to fetch more dollars than those needed for purchasing food the Government would not care whether the country attained food self-sufficiency or not, but would encourage crops like cotton etc. Not that in such cases, Government would altogether neglect self-sufficiency in food, but having regard to the advantage of prices, it would not insist upon full self-sufficiency. In these circumstances, Government would be satisfied if a major part of it was produced here, and a minor one only had to be imported. But even thus moderated the reasoning is defective at its very foundation. Indeed, it is advanced not by way of a basic policy of the Government, but because, under the present circumstances, there is no alternative to becoming as much self-sufficient in food as possible. But if circumstances altered and, for instance, a country like America were prepared to supply cheaply a large amount of our food requirements and there was a chance of our obtaining good prices for our own agricultural products, it cannot be vouchsafed that even the petty limitations of this self-sufficiency will be respected. The stupidity of American reasoning impels them to burn standing crops in order to maintain high prices. It is said that last year they destroyed the potato crop with their own hands. We cannot therefore hope to have cheap grains from them. But Government reasoning indicates that self-sufficiency in food will not be much bothered about in case this were possible with the help of some other country.

In a nutshell, the exceptional situation put forth discloses on the part of Government a commercial mentality which has no regard for *swadeshi*, no thought of the *sarvodaya* ideal, and no vision for village well-being. It strikes a blow at the very root of our Swaraj.

We all desire to avert a world war, and to develop for our country the strength to do so; or, in case it cannot be prevented, at least to ensure that we remain outside it. But this cannot happen, by our merely entertaining a desire. For its successful materialization, a decentralized economic policy will have to be thoroughly implemented all over the country. If we think only on commercial lines we shall gradually drift towards the view that we must join one of the blocs. As a matter of fact, I see signs of such a drift already. Politicians have been discussing whether we shall choose Russia or America. Seeing the advance of the Communist menace some have expressed the futility of adopting the attitude of neutrality in our foreign policy. We forget that the danger to ourselves can be averted not so much by our adopting a particular *foreign* policy as by following a right *swadeshi* policy.

The Government have instituted an Economic Planning Commission. It is worthwhile to know its views about the exceptions above referred to. I hope that it will not allow the development of such dangerous breaches in the walls of the nation.

Paunar, 11-12-'50 VINOBA

(Translated from Hindi)

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